

# POLITICIZATION OF THE BROADCAST MEDIA: AN EXAMINATION OF 2015 GENERAL ELECTIONS IN NIGERIA

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## ABSTRACT

**Propose** - There cannot be democracy without elections, nor can there be elections without the presence of vibrant media. Therefore, the media serves as the catalyst for the smooth operation and conduct of any election. Media as a channel of communication are constitutionally responsible for steering the affairs of any electoral democracy by educating the populace with up to date information that is qualitative in nature to transform them into meaningful mindsets for the betterment of the system in general. However, the way and manner the media conducted its affairs during the 2015 general elections in Nigeria necessitated the need for this paper. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to examine the nature and character of the broadcast media specifically looking at the 2015 general elections in Nigeria. Also, the paper adopts, one of the normative theories in communication studies (Authoritarian theory of communication) to set the pace in the examination.

**Literature Review** - It has been observed by the study of Akinwalere (2013) that, the centrality of the media in any democratic polity like Nigeria cannot be down played, simply because of the role they played in strengthening not only the conduct of free and fair elections but also the proper workings of democratization process as a whole. However, the study concluded that, since the returned of the country to democratization process in 1999, the media has been misused by the power holders for their selfish interest. Similarly, Opene (2012) added weight to the body of literature that pin points the centrality of the media in electoral politics. He added that, the Nigerian media was one of the leading actors that shaped the attitude of Nigerian populace in electing President Goodluck Jonathan during the 2011 general elections in the country. This was attested by the result of his study, where 74.4% of the respondents argued that Jonathan as the president elect after the 2011 general elections was more exposed to media compared to his opponents

**Methodology** - The paper would adopts secondary sources as a method of data collection by consulting related documentary sources such as books, journals, code of election coverage, Nigerian constitution, freedom of information act among others that have direct bearing on the subject matter.

**Keywords:** Democracy, election, political party, politicization, Nigeria.

## CONCLUSIONS

The paper concludes that the media particularly the broadcast media have been politicized to a very large extent during the 2015 general elections in Nigeria, reporting unethical issues and attacking the personality of the opposition candidates which is against the journalistic best practices across the globe. This was common especially with the public media outfits. The paper recommends that the media should be professional in the discharge of its social responsibility in educating the people with truthful, factual and educative information without fair or favor. This will no doubt equip the people with qualitative information to make informed choices during the electioneering activity, thereby, improving the quality of the elections in particular and democracy in general.

## REFERENCES

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